



(step 403), e.g., by entering a valid password at the computer 111. This password is communicated to the server 101 over the Internet. In step 405, it is determined whether any of the other purchasers, i.e., other members belonging to the virtual group 21, is online, i.e., connected to the at least one server provided by the ISP via the Internet. If not, the control flow passes to step 411, i.e. the chat room is accessed. If any one of the other purchasers is online, the control flow is directed to step 407 where it is determined whether the instant messaging service (such as Instant Messenger™) has been requested. If so, all of the other purchasers who are online at the time are notified by the instant messaging service that a new purchaser has logged on (step 409). If the instant messaging service is not requested in step 407, then the control flow is directed to step 411 where the chat room is accessed. --

On page 9, please delete the first paragraph and replace with the following:

-- Once the chat room is accessed in step 411, the access is confirmed (step 413), e.g., by entering a valid password at the computer 111 which is in communication with the server 101 over the Internet. A change menu for changing the group information or the lottery information is then displayed (step 415). In step 417, it is determined whether a change in any of the group information is requested. The group information comprise, e.g., the member list 201, which includes biographical information for each of the purchasers in the group; the member e-mail 202, which includes electronic mail (e-mail) addresses for the purchasers (if any); the member tel 203, which includes the telephone numbers for the purchasers (if any); the member fax 204, which includes the fax numbers for the purchasers (if any); and the member cell 205, which includes the cellular telephone numbers for the purchaser (if any). If no change is requested in step 417, the control flow passes to step 425. If change is requested in step 417, that change is stored in the server 101 (step 419). Any changes effecting the chat room stored and implemented as well (step 421). Once the change is authorized and authenticated in step 423, the control flow is directed to step 425 (FIG. 4B). --

